Playa Lingo: the lexicon of Black Rock City

Black Holes
The dark spots that mysteriously appear on the playa after dark.
Why don't they put some damn porta-potties out on the playa? Then maybe there wouldn't be some many black holes the next morning!

Boring Man
a) derogatory term for Burning Man; b) common exclamation spoken at half-assed theme camps; c) a guy who goes to Burning Man only to try to get laid
This year, I figured, fuck, if they're not going to let me bring my guns and my dog, then I'm not even going to Boring Man.

Civilization
The line to the porta-potties.
Ah yes, a quick visit to civilization is as fine a time as any to read the latest issue of Piss Clear.

Desert Dyke
Any normally heterosexual woman who, when in Black Rock City, allows herself to experiment with other women.
Dude, I don't know if it was the Ecstacy or what, but last night at Bianca's Smut Shack, my girlfriend totally turned into a desert dyke! It was hot!

Extreme Freestyle Napping
Like a power nap, this feat can only be achieved by truly exhausted and resourceful people.
After being up all night, around three or four in the afternoon is the best time to do extreme freestyle napping, before starting all over again.

Filthy Santa
Any naked, hairy, overweight, middle-aged man who dresses up their genitalia like a goddamn Christmas tree.
Did you see that filthy Santa getting all this amorous attention over at the Jiffy Lube Lounge? I thought they only liked circuit queens over there!

Insect Interval
The time it takes for the flies from Gerlach to find Black Rock City. Usually about three to four days.
I thought this was supposed to be a lifeless playa! We obviously got here after the insect interval.

Over-the-falls
That giddy feeling you get just before collapsing from heat exhaustion.
I was taking a walk along the trash fence when all of a sudden I felt like I was going over-the-falls. Good thing that motorized couch came by and picked me up.

Pissography
The writing of words in urine on the playa. Usually done by males, but can also be performed by extremely talented females.
Next time you need to leave a message for me at camp, please don't write it with pissography. Pen and paper will do just fine, thank you.

Playa Pounder
Your beater bike used to get around Black Rock City.
Look at what all this playa dust did to my gears! Good thing I brought this playa pounder instead of my Nishiki.

Playa Time
The strange bending and folding of time that happens as you start packing your car for the trip and doesn't stop until you get home.
I know we've only been out here two days, but playa time makes it feel like a week!

Richard
Any ugly, naked asshole who insists on running around nude and being generally obnoxious, causing all those in view to avert their eyes. Named after Richard Hatch from *Survivor*.
Everything was going great until Richard over there decided to camp next to us. Now what are we going to do about the kids?

Yahoo
Any non-participatory, spectating, rude, or leering, person in Black Rock City.
I've noticed that there aren't as many yahoos this year, probably because they stopped selling tickets at the gate.

TAZ
Contrary to "Temporary Autonomous Zone," TAZ really stands for "Temporarily Annoying Zone" such as the site of Pepe's dreadful opera.
Black Rock City is practically one big huge TAZ this year, what with all the annoying raves and stupid-ass theme camps, not to mention the annoyingly pretentious people.

— compiled by Penfold, Bryan Finch, and PF

Interview with a diplomat

Chatting with Burning Man creator Larry Harvey

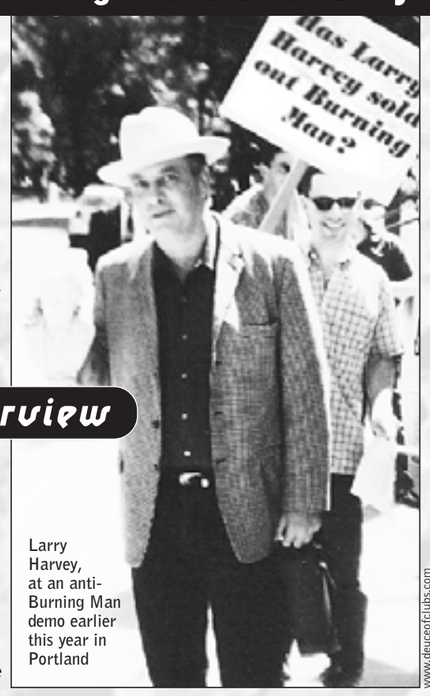
by ADRIAN ROBERTS

Two weeks before the start of this year's Burning Man, event creator Larry Harvey graciously agrees to meet with me for an interview in a Lower Haight cafe in San Francisco. At first, I don't even recognize him — why, he's not wearing his famous hat! After ordering our lattés, we sit outside on the patio, where the 53-year-old Harvey, a relentless chain smoker, can enjoy his favorite vice.

Two hours and a dozen Camel Lights later, I've taken him to task on all things Burning Man, including his salary, his hat, and his ego. He takes every question in stride, answering ever-so-diplomatically in his trademark rambling style. It's a thoroughly enjoyable interview.

PISS CLEAR: *It's widely-known that the first Burning Man, an eight-foot tall effigy burned on Baker Beach in San Francisco back in 1986, was inspired by a particularly devasting break-up you had with a woman. Is this true?*

LARRY HARVEY: Yeah, it's true to a degree. People seek in the origins the germ of the thing, the myth that tells you what it means. But in a way, that's a little like locating the beginning of the Mississippi River, where it's some little trickle up in Canada. At the time, [the break-up] wasn't on my mind. I didn't come up with that [origin story] until like, six years later, when a journalist for *Outside* magazine asked me, 'What was in your mind at the time?' For the first time, I delved just a little deeper and said, 'Well, you know, actually that probably *was* one of the main motives.'



Larry Harvey, at an anti-Burning Man demo earlier this year in Portland

www.deuceofclubs.com

PC: *So burning this figure of a man was your art?*

LH: I'm not really an artist. I have a lot of aesthetic ideas that I've created, but I'm not really an artist. I'm more of an impresario. It was just an image that sprang up in my mind, and I did it.

PC: *At what point did you realize that you were going to do this every year?*

LH: The resolve to do it, the inspiration to do it — when we were *destined* to do it — was at the moment when all these people we didn't know, all these strangers suddenly doubled our numbers on the beach. And that was moving, that was inspiring.

I think if it had been a little more like a closed party, or an installation or performance at a gallery, it would never have gone anywhere after that. We would have done something else and moved on. But it was spontaneous and inspiring, the response of all these folks. And they immediately began participating! This woman ran over and grabbed the Man's hand. And then this hippie was there, and he started playing a song on his guitar about burning. And in the circumstances, it was very moving! And I didn't know either of them!

And so there were two historic firsts there, the doubling of our numbers and the participation of people who didn't necessarily know one another, but through that participation, connected.

PC: *What were you doing before Burning Man really took off? In other words, how did you pay your rent?*

LH: Well, I only paid it sporadically! I did a bunch of things. Before we started this thing, I was a bicycle messenger — an *old* bicycle messenger! I drove a cab for a while. I got into landscaping. It was the kind of thing that bohos do. You know, I'll tell you the truth, I never really wanted a normal job. I never could do it very well. The only thing I ever wanted to do was what I absolutely *had* to do. I wanted to realize some kind of vision — I just wasn't sure what it was! But by 1990, I realized what I wanted to do. I wanted to burn this big giant thing in the desert. It's gonna be big!

PC: *At what point were you actually able to start making a living doing Burning Man?*

LH: I didn't get a complete year-round salary out of it until '98.

PC: *What's your salary?*

LH: Well, it's not vast. How can I answer this? I'll say this: I've got the top salary. I'm probably making more than I could anywhere else, because I probably couldn't get a job anywhere else. What am I going to do? What, direct an art gallery? Uh, no. I'm sorry. And that would be the closest approximation, I guess.

But the people I work with, our senior staff — twelve people who receive salaries — they are making from one-third to one-sixth of what they'd be making if they were applying their talents in the normal world. And we don't have a health plan.

PC: *If you decided to stop doing Burning Man, would it continue without you?*

LH: Yeah, I think it would.

PC: *So you'd be able to pass the reins of control on to someone else?*

LH: Of course! I have a few goals in life. One is to see my kid grow up to lead a good life, and the other is for this to endure beyond me. Between the little man and the big Man, those are my two big passions.

That's kind of the goal, really, to get to the point where it wouldn't need me — and it's getting there. I mean, it can be a little frightening to walk away from it — and I don't very often — and then come back to find that things went just fine without me. In a way, you're proud, and in another, you're nervous!

PC: *What exactly is your role in the Burning Man organization? I know that many people think that you're simply a figurehead by this point.*

LH: That's not really true. I have a whole set of specific responsibilities. I'm in charge of the art department. I write a lot for the Project. I have a keen interest in supervising the emergence of the city plan. But I also supervise the board, too. I'm a diplomat. I deal with a lot of politics. There are a lot of politics.

And I work very closely with [Maid] Marian, who is not only the Mistress of Communication, but she also functions in part as a kind of CFO, watching the money. We're really like a non-profit in our structure.

I have some prestige with my peers. And I can argue a lot — if I really set my heart on something, I can get my way, or if I'm against something, I can stop it. But I've never exercised power that way. So when there are staff disputes, I'm the one who can come in and resolve that. I wrangle people. So that's why I'm called the director.

PC: *What would make you stop doing Burning Man?*

LH: If it became apparent that it was impossible to create a city that would achieve the goals we had in mind. If we knew that the numbers would overwhelm it, and there was nothing we could do about that, I wouldn't want to do it.

PC: *Yeah, '96 was the last year of Burning Man being a sprawling free-for-all.*

LH: It was a very interesting year. There was a lot of internal struggle.

PC: *That was the last year that John Law, one of the original Burning Man organizers, was involved. Why did he end up leaving?*

LH: I think, most fundamentally, his vision of it — his aims — were not the same as the rest of the people who were organizing it. I hesitate to speak for him, but my impression is that he wanted it to be an anarchist underground outlaw event, like this *Mad Max* fantasy. It was the punk credo, "fuck shit up."

I had never wanted it to be that. I never did! People say, 'Hasn't Burning Man strayed from its original aims and principals?' Well, they weren't *mine!*

PC: *So you always wanted Burning Man to be more organized than it initially was?*

LH: I always wanted it to be a city. I love civic planning.

PC: *It's like "playing city," instead of "playing house."*

LH: Yeah, I like that! That's exactly what it is.

PC: *Where do you camp in Black Rock City?*

LH: At First Camp. It's the first camp on the playa. It's [Department of Public Works Director] Will Rogers' camp, really. It's in the keyhole. And I will confess, that it's the best fucking view in the city! But listen, if it were just me, I probably wouldn't claim the spot. It's Will's. He has every right.

"I'm not really an artist. I have a lot of aesthetic ideas that I've created, but I'm not really an artist. I'm more of an impresario."

PC: *A lot of people think that where Burning Man is at right now is already too big.*

LH: A lot of people think that the first year they came was the Golden Age.

PC: *Well, that's always the case. Going to Burning Man is like taking Ecstacy. The first time you do it is always the best, and you keep doing it again and again, trying to relive that initial high — but it's never as good as your first time.*

LH: It depends. My first year was not the best time. It's uniquely memorable as a kind of starting point of inspiration, so that's valuable. But my best year — and this is why I'm still doing it — is always the year that I'm in. And I fully expect that this year is going to be the best yet.

The first year you come, it's like there's this complete, effortless, narcissistic gratification, mystically provided. It's a dream! And that's really wonderful. But the more you come, the more difficult it is to achieve that spirit unless you make an effort. You have to invest more into it, in order to get something back. So what I've found is that the people who will tell you that it's a good year, and don't pine for the past, are the people who are doing something.

This year, by our theme camp staff's reckoning, there are 11,400 people involved in some way in creating a theme camp.

PC: *So what's up with minorities in Black Rock City? How come there seem to be so few non-whites here?*

LH: Burning Man caters to white folks for one primary reason, and that's because they're the most privileged and richest members of this society. They're also the most disconnected from one another, because of their consumer clout — because they can live without any relation to anyone else.

Now if you're poor and a member of what we call an ethnic minority, it also means that you network. It means that you're connected to family in a way that white folks aren't, necessarily.

PC: *Not to completely generalize, but do you think white people come out to Black Rock City to create a community they wouldn't otherwise normally have?*

LH: You bet! To find roots, and to find a sense of relation to other people. If you're in the 'hood, and the uncles and aunts and cousins are all around, you're in this network, this community, you have all that stuff. But a lot of white folks are sitting at home with their catalog furniture and wondering what it's all about. And so [Burning Man] has a more immediate appeal. Spiritually speaking, the white folks are needier, even though materially, they're much advantaged.

It's an odd thing — in Black Rock, you say that everyone's white. Although it's hard to say, because a lot of them are blue or green — I mean, literally. But I've always found that when I look at the video afterwards, I actually see more black people than I thought. So I think it's budging a little bit, but just at the margins, I admit that.

PC: *What year would you consider to be Burning Man's least successful?*

LH: I can identify the hardest year, the most stressful year: '96. That's the watershed year.

PC: *The Medevac year! Every night Medevacs flew in to rescue someone who was hurt. That was the year that killed the magic for a lot of people.*

LH: It had an effect on us. It galvanized us with a vision of things that we were going to change. The cars. The guns.

There came a day when we realized that we were a city, and that we had to be civic. And there's nothing wrong with being civic. I live in a city, and I like civility.

PC: *Well, he built the damn city! On to more personal matters: are you still dating Maid Marian?*

LH: Yes. When I see her. We talk everyday, and we get together two or three times a week.

PC: *So what's up with The Hat?*

LH: Well, it's a costume, in a way. The whole hat thing is complex. First of all, I wear The Hat in memory of my father, who wore the original. That hat, which is a Stetson, would be formal-wear in Nebraska. And he was a cowboy from Nebraska. I kept it for years, and in 1990, I found it in a hat box. It's the only thing I had from him. And rather than keep it as a relic, I wore it. And then I just kept wearing it. So it means a lot to me. I admired my father a lot.

Beyond that, there's a certain utility in it. It's possible, in a crowd, for me to take my hat off and just slip out and leave. Because I disappear. So it's a way of creating a public persona. Contrary to popular belief, when I'm at home, I don't always wear my hat.

PC: *You've basically created, out of nothing, an annual ritual that could conceivably go on forever, and keep growing and growing. Doesn't that feed your ego a bit?*

LH: Well, it's really funny in a way. On one level, it's really gratifying, right? I'm a major celebrity in my community. But I can walk around the corner, and then I'm just a guy standing in line for a loaf of bread. So let's not deceive ourselves.

Within our little world, I'm a celebrity, yes. But I'm actually a shy person. I'm like a lot of people, who work hard to do things in the world — but I'm continually at war with myself about my own worth and haunted by the suspicion that I'm nothing at all. So I've got to manifest something to make sure that it's not true.

PC: *Last question: do you piss clear?*

LH: Generally, I do. About three years ago, I started to dry up, naturally. Like the playa itself. So now I have to drink a lot

Astrology for the playa

by MIZ DEIDRE

ARIES *the Ram* (21 Mar.—20 Apr.)
Charge! You are full speed ahead into the thrills and chills of the playa. The key to a spectacular Burning Man experience for you, Ram, is to gain new allies and make new conquests, and I think you Rams know what I mean. You will also encounter a thing of beauty that will move you. This object will offer you some sort of temptation, but don't do it. You'll be glad you didn't. There will be better temptation coming your way. "*Whenever I'm caught between two evils, I take the one I've never tried.*" — *Mae West*

TAURUS *the Bull* (21 Apr. — 21 May)
Does the phrase "bull in a china shop" mean anything to you? Of course not, because you are a Bull in control. But guess what Taurus? Time to let go! Yep, its time to take advantage of your time, your vices, and a willing partner. You work hard so its time to play hard to even the score. No big epiphanies at Burning Man this year, just a damn good time. "*I hate to advocate drugs. alcohol, or insanity to anyone, but they've always worked for me.*" — *Hunter S. Thompson*

GEMINI *the Twins* (22 May — 23 June)
As usual there are two sides of you battling to lead the way. You'd think twins would learn to play together better! This week let them both lead. One will take you into the heat of day, onto the dusty playa, and will try to teach you how to commune with nature. You may fight it at first, but soon you will be seeing the playa in a new way (there may be a little helper). The other twin will take you on a journey under the stars, into the dark of night, where you will meet angels and nutcases (and in some cases you won't know which is which). "*I am at two with nature.*" — *Woody Allen*

CANCER *the Crab* (23 June — 23 July)
Cancer, dears, you are going to be overwhelmed with dust and beauty. There are going to be moments where it *is* too much, and moments when your anticipation will be even more so. My advice to you is to say yes to everything. I mean it, everything! If you follow my advice, you will also be the recipient of a good time and a few surprises. "*Too much of a good thing is wonderful.*" — *Mae West*

LEO *the Lion* (24 July — 23 Aug.)
This week you big kitties will enjoy frolicking in the sun. Some of you will be rolling around on the playa, some simply stalking your prey. Either way, you will be probably be pouncing on some poor unsuspecting earth sign, so be gentle you beasts! Some of you will enjoy the company of strangers in a whole new way this year. Don't worry, we'll keep your secret. As for the rest, you will get an even greater pleasure out of the tight bond (or was that bondage?) between you and that special someone. And for those of you lions who do get lucky on the playa, remember: "*Is sex dirty? Only if it's done right.*" — *Woody Allen*

VIRGO *the Virgin* (24 Aug. — 23 Sept.)
I see fire in your future, Virgo. And it's not just the Man. This week, forget you're an earth sign, and let yourself get caught up in the fiery glow of everything around you. Your flames are going to be dancing to new heights. Don't be humble, Virgo, its time to show off. I guarantee, people will notice. "*From a little spark burst forth a mighty flame.*" — *Dante*

LIBRA *the Scales* (24 Sept. — 23 Oct.)
This week's theme for you Libras should be "Go with the flow." You will get the most out of this week if you refuse to be tied down to any specific plan. That includes the company you keep, your sleeping arrangements, and the drugs you choose to (or not to) do! If someone tries to change your mind, let them! Remember: "*Indecision is the key to flexibility.*" — *Anonymous*

SCORPIO *the Scorpion* (24 Oct. — 23 Nov.)
Okay Scorpions, this week will be a week full of fun and games, of the mental persuasion. You are going to attract all kinds of freaks and weirdos. Some you will run from, and some you will gravitate towards. Use your seductive prowess to gain the upper hand. Once you have the upper hand, you'll get something you've always wanted. Just remember: "*Sex appeal is 50% what you've got and 50% what people think you've got.*" — *Murphy's law for sex*

SAGITTARIUS *the Archer* (23 Nov. — 22 Dec.)
Ready to roam? Of course you are. The Archer is off and running. You've been needing a little escape, and now is the time. I encourage you to not only escape physically, but take a long needed mental journey as well. You will have an epiphany in the desert. Once you have this epiphany, you will become one with the universe! Okay, I'm lying, but a plan will be in motion. But keep in mind: "*There is a fine line between fishing and just standing on the shore like an idiot.*" — *Steven Wright*

CAPRICORN *the Goat* (23 Dec. — 19 Jan.)
Its time to open up, you old goat! This week its great to be practical with your food rations, but not with your heart. Whether you like it or not, love is at your door (okay maybe tent). It could be a new love to cross your path, or a current love, who is causing your flames to dance higher. For once, throw caution to the wind, stop thinking, and go for what you are feeling! And remember: "*Love is like pi — natural, irrational and very important.*" — *Lisa Hoffman*

AQUARIUS *the Water Bearer* (20 Jan. — 19 Feb.)
Looney looney looney! This chalks up your Burning Man experience. You will be delightfully surprised by hidden insanity this week. Someone will draw you in to their wacky way of thinking for at least a moment. You will also make a connection with a whacked-out Gemini that will have a great impact on your future. Don't think the stars have forgotten about *you* though! The people around you this week will find you a bit looney as well, but they'll love you for it. Just remember: "*The only normal people are the ones you don't know very well.*" — *Joe Ancis*

PISCES *the Fishes* (20 Feb. — 20 Mar.)
You are going to feel like Alice in Wonderland this week, Pisces. Only you're not Alice and this is the Black Rock Desert. Instead of traipsing through the Kingdom, you are going to be taking your own journey through the queendom. One moment you will feel very large, the next very small, and the next moment you'll be sharing smoke with a caterpillar. And you will enjoy every step of the way. Remember: "*Illusion is the first of all pleasures.*" — *Oscar Wilde*

classifieds

PAPERBOYS & PAPERGIRLS WANTED TO HELP DELIVER *PISS CLEAR!*
Help deliver *Piss Clear* to the Black Rock City masses! We've got a bunch of different paper routes and a city of 28,000 to cover. Please stop by the Piss Clear offices, right next to the Jiffy Lube Lounge at 6:40 Brain, and ask for Distribution Dick. Be part of the *Piss Clear* delivery team! It's a great way to meet people! An excellent ice-breaker! Make new friends! Get dates! Get laid! All while delivering the *best* newspaper in Black Rock City!

BURNING MAN HOOKY HELPER
So the boss wouldn't give you time off for Burning Man? Call in sick every morning at 7:00 from your home computer with this handy software. "Hello, Ted? I'm still not feeling very well. This virus is a doozy! Good thing I decided not to go to the desert this year." Available now at the Hooky Helper Camp.

RANGER RADIO ON 99.5 FM
Great fucking songs you've never fucking heard before — every day on the Ranger Radio Show with playa DJ Big Bear. Don't be left out, buckaroos. Tune in to Radio Free Burning Man at 99.5 FM every day at 3:00 p.m.

SATELLITE PHOTO OF BLACK ROCK CITY
This Friday, September 1, at 10:49 a.m., an orbiting satellite will shoot a photo of Black Rock City. The resolution will be 1 meter in black & white, and 3 meters in color. This photo is being arranged by the folks at Black Rock Spaceport at 4:20 on the Esplanade. Individuals and their shadows will be viewable at this resolution. The citizens of Black Rock City are urged to stand on the same coordinates as the laser Man, in order for the Man icon to be seen in the photos. Or perhaps some enterprising individuals will form human crop circles, or other shapes, which will be seen from the satellite.

JILTED ZEALOT
Last year was my first time. I walked away with so many plans for this year's event, it was painful. I was to be a classic second-year attendee, you know, the one who goes apeshit on the theme camp thing, etc. So I feel I need to state exactly just *how pissed* I am with the fucking ticket hike this year, for whatever reason — BLM, B.S., Larry Harvey's new SUV, I don't care! It's just plain expensive, and it has just about destroyed all of my delusions of grandeur for BM2000. But I *am* here, goddamnit, only not nearly as pretty as originally intended. I'm a jilted zealot, I'm on the edge. I just might kidnap someone's prized possession, someone's water supply, a raver's teddy bear, the Man himself — and hold it ransom till I get some compensation for the blood, sweat, and tears that I spent just getting here this year. Watch your ass. Class war is brewing in Black Rock City. — *Chainsaw Polkadot Partridge*

BM 2001 TICKET POLICY
A limited number of first tier $300 Burning Man tickets will go on sale beginning February 1, 2001. The ticket will entitle the bearer to an unprecedented Burning Man Experience, which includes, but is not limited to: free parking, unlimited porta-potty access, general admission seating the night of the Burn, a commemorative numbered ticket suitable for framing, and free follow-up access to the BurningMan.com website. A limited number of $5,000 Platinum passes will also be sold. These special passes will entitle patrons to daily golf cart rides, fireside chats with Larry Harvey, priority seating at the Burn, your own reserved couch at Bianca's Smut Shack, a signed one-of-a-kind sarong designed by Pepé Ozan, members-only porta-potties with top-of-the-line triple-ply toilet tissue, daily solar-heated showers, and a professionally-edited video (DVD or VHS) documenting your experience at Burning Man 2001.

WHAT'S OUT	WHAT'S IN
Bianca's Smut Shack	Jiffy Lube Lounge
www.burningman.com	www.cardhouse.com/drcliff/wreck/dead/bmisdead.htm
cell phones	walkie-talkies
cheap chicken feather boas	ostrich feather boas
Critical Tits	Critical Dicks
electroluminecent wire	real fucking flashlights
Gerlach	Nixon
Germans	Canadians
glow necklaces	glow piercings
glow sticks	Krill lamps
golf carts	motorized scooters
Maglite	Mini Maglite
Pepe's opera	Kill the opera! No more, ever!
SUVs	RVs
techno hippie rave camps	Death Guild Thunderdome

— list compiled by Distribution Dick, Dennis Hinkamp, Stewart McKenzie, Penfold, PF, and Adrian Roberts

Drug guide for the playa

by TOKYO RICO

Back by popular demand, it's *Piss Clear*'s infamous drug guide! Here are some quick tips on the proper way to indulge in some of the playa's most popular psychoactive substances, courtesy of Tokyo Rico.

ALCOHOL
Have a few beers. Or have some wine. Or get buzzed on a shot or two. *Just don't get really drunk!* I've seen playa-dwellers mix just about every narcotic cocktail there is, and without question the most horrifying, most out-of-control, most dangerous, and most pathetic bummers I've ever witnessed were the result of folks getting down-on-your-knees drunk in the desert. Think about it — do you really want to risk uncontrollable vomiting in an environment where it's already difficult to stay hydrated?

MARIJUANA
I think of good ol' friendly weed as a drug that makes you all warm and cozy. So I'm always surprised when I find it actually doesn't suck to be a little doped-up in the desert, even on a hot day. In fact, the dreamy, floaty sensation can make an otherwise high-speed, mile-a-minute event slow down for a few blissful hours.

Try ingestion (via brownie or other buttery medium) over inhalation, as the high lasts longer and won't dry your throat up any more than it already is from breathing dusty desert air. Careful, though — eating too much can result in an almost hallucinogenic experience. Nice if that's what you're after, but if that's what you're after, why not try an actual hallucinogen? Also, last year I loaded up on a few special brownies, biked out to the trash fence, sat cross-legged in the dust contemplating my navel, and came dangerously close to falling asleep. Which would have sucked, seeing as I hadn't applied sunscreen.

ECSTASY
If it's really Ecstasy, then you're in for a fine time. Year after year, it remains *Piss Clear*'s drug of choice out on the playa. A few words regarding safety and comfort, however:

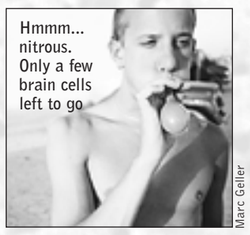
A) *Test your pills!* There are little liquid drop things called "marquis reagent testing kits" that can tell you if you've been slipped a bogus pill of some evil drug masquerading as E. Berkeley-based DanceSafe distributes a lot of these kits, and I heard they may even have a testing booth on the playa this year, so look for them.

B) Drink water. You should be doing this anyway because you're in the middle of the fucking desert, but now you're in the middle of the fucking desert and you're high on a drug that speeds up your heart rate and increases your blood pressure *and* dehydrates you. So drink *more* water.

C) Dance, fine, have fun. But take a rest every now and then, will ya? Don't make your heart explode.

D) Have some 5htp tablets on hand to cushion the emotional crash. 5htp is legally available at health stores, and will supposedly help replenish some of the serotonin your little tab of E squeezed from your brain's axons. Some people take a few 5htp tabs before dosing, then a few after. Others just take a few after. Others take one per hour for many hours, starting as soon as they feel themselves coming down. I dunno, pick one.

drug guide


Hmmm... nitrous. Only a few brain cells left to go

Marc Geller

NITROUS
Do not inhale this stuff while standing and especially not while dancing, unless you don't like your face and want to fall flat on it a lot. A friend once told me nitrous is good to do if you're having a bad hallucinogen trip — for 30 long seconds, the universe around you quadruples in size, and when it's over you can say to yourself, "Well, at least I'm not *that* high."

MUSHROOMS
An organic drug with organic effects — mushrooms render nature's wonders that much more wonderful. A small amount will make you feel silly and playful, a fat dose gives you a peek into God's brain, which, let me tell you, is very, very pretty. People tend to take hallucinogens at night, but 'shrooms are especially fun in the daytime, as they make colors almost blindingly vibrant. Great thing about 'shrooms, too, is that the trip is relatively short — usually about five or six hours — and afterwards you can sleep if you want, unlike acid, to which I always have to give practically a whole day. I've also found that I get ridiculously horny a few hours after coming down from these happy fungi, which one year resulted in me necking with two total strangers I found lounging on a bed fronting the Esplanade. The strangers happened to be on mushrooms, too, so I guess this aphrodisiac effect is not peculiar to me.

ACID
I don't do this stuff any more because it resulted in bummers about 50% of the time. All I can say is, once you've dosed, hang on and keep telling yourself "It's all in my head, it's all in my head." Unless the idea of so much stuff being in your head freaks you out. Then stop telling yourself that and listen to some Jefferson Airplane. At least that's what Hunter S. Thompson would do.

28 ways to fuck your life up at Burning Man

Don't drink lots of water.
Don't wear SPF 30.
Drive over 5 mph.
Wear a Star Trek costume.
Lick flaming objects.
Sing Britney Spears songs.
Ask for camp placement on the Esplanade.
Assume she's a he.
Assume he's a she.
Install a cell phone site.
Fight in the Thunderdome.
Graffiti your "tag" everywhere.
Drill for oil.
Ask "Just who's in charge here?"
Tease Dr. Megavolt
Step on rebar and then try to pretend it's a stigmata costume.
Put liquid latex on any unshaved area of your body.
Ask Larry Harvey to autograph your bible.
Ask Media Mecca where the best-looking nekkid chicks can be found.
Strip naked, adorn your pubic region with paint and feathers, hoist a large bong high into air, frolic with an army of nude weedheads in front of a phalanx of photographers, and then attempt to run for Senate.
Spend the week hidden in your RV.
Forget to sleep.
Forget your shoes when you visit the porta-potties.
Wander away from your camp at night by yourself while high on hallucinogens.
Get really, really drunk. Pass out in the sun.
Run up the Burning Man's steps just as they set him on fire.
Run up to one of the Washoe County cops and pull out something that looks like a gun.
Shoot flares at passing helicopters.

— list compiled by Dennis Hinkamp, Lenny Jones, Playa Kitten, and Tokyo Rico

Top 10 albums for the playa

by GAVIN HECK

1. **Kruder & Dorfmeister** — *The K&D Sessions*
Sexy, stoney music made by people with dorkier names than yours!

2. **Naked Funk** — *Valium X-Files* influenced beats for when the aliens come for your cum.

3. **Q-Burns Abstract Message** — *Feng Shui*
"Everything here must have its place." Indeed.

4. **Tom Waits** — *Mule Variations*
Perfect hangover music for your neighbors.

5. **DJ Cam** — *The French Connection*
Tunes for your tongue. (French, get it?)

6. **Dee-lite** — *Sampladelic* remixes
How do you say dee-desert?

7. **Dimitri from Paris** — *A Night at the Playboy Mansion*
Bring your ass (to shake) and your ascot (to wear).

8. **Bob Marley** — *Dreams of Freedom (Bill Lazwell Remixes)*
Can't move? Made of clouds? This is your acoustic pillow.

9. **Funki Porcini** — *The Ultimately Empty Million Pounds*
More sexy beats, where is my chest hair wig?

10. **Atari Teenage Riot** — *60 Second Wipe Out*
Wake the fuck up, its time to clean up and go home!

Random quotes

"Who are more smug? People who went to the first Woodstock or people who went to the first Burning Man?"
— Dennis Hinkamp

"This place is just like Disneyland, only better because you don't need money."
— written on a postcard left in Penfold's Playa Post Box

"Did you know that the town of Gerlach was originally called Deep Hole? The name was changed to Gerlach in 1909."
— Danger Ranger